

**Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)
Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)
WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE
SITUATION REPORT # 16
1200 Hours October 23, 2005**

New Information in Bold Italics

***Next Conference Call is scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2005, 0930 hours
Information for Situation Report should be submitted to the VEOC no later than 1000 hours daily***

WEATHER

Forecast:

Southwest VA: Partly cloudy with 20% chance of showers in the afternoon. High temperatures in the mid to upper 50's, West winds less than 10 MPH. Tonight – Partly cloudy with a chance of rain showers, becoming more cloudy with an increase in rain showers, but also snow showers at elevations above 3000 feet. Low temperatures in the mid- 30's, West winds less than 10 MPH.

NWS Morristown has posted the Latest Hydrologic Outlook Statement on their home page - <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MRX/ESFMRX>, but no precipitation has been recorded at the Big Cherry Dam for the 24-hour period beginning 7AM, October 22, 2005.

VEOC analysis of projected paths of Hurricane Wilma and Tropical Storm Alpha indicate no significant contribution to drought relief.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation:

The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

State of Emergency:

On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage.

Executive Order 99 (2005) has been amended to impose an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap, effective immediately and continuing until such time as local officials advise the Governor it should be lifted.

Local Situation:

Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

STATE AGENCIES

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

A VDEM Hazardous Materials Officer is coordinating with Wise County, the Town of Big Stone Gap, and state/local agencies to identify needed resources and continue logistical support. A VDEM Reservist is on site at the Wise County Command Post to assist with logistics and finance.

The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies and compiling a list of available resources.

The VEOC is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Receiving reports daily from Big Stone Gap Water Treatment Plant on water monitoring from blivets and other stored water supplies.

The Environmental Health Specialist visited all permitted food establishments on Friday, October 21, to verify compliance with boil notice, review plans submitted,

follow-up with facilities that have not yet submitted plans to verify their intentions, and to emphasize adherence to water testing for those with storage tanks.

Virginia National Guard (VNG)

The VNG continues distribution and blivet support mission. Eleven blivets are placed at the following locations: one at each of the three public schools, one at the Hospital, one at the Nursing Home, one serving the community college/DMME, one at the Special Needs Shelter, two supporting the Portable Water Processing Plants, and two supporting the Powell River Cave #1 pumping operation. The 350-gpm pump at the cave site is pumping water as scheduled. Fifteen soldiers remain on mission.

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Monitoring Powell River water flow.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The VDOC is refilling blivets daily.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

VDOT has 4 message boards in the Big Stone Gap area.

A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

Department of General Services/Consolidated Labs

Testing of the Clinch Haven Farm well was conducted and results relayed to the VDH and Town of Big Stone Gap.

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

The VDOF has signs in place notifying residents of the burn ban.

Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME)

DMME Geologist advised officials they are pumping water from the Powell River Cave #1 not the Hairy Hole Cave. Hairy Hole Cave is a separate cave and not considered a viable source for water. Powell River Cave #1 receives 90-95% of its water from the South Fork of the Powell River and once the reservoir is empty the cave will dry up.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Local, county and state personnel met on Saturday, October 22 and identified the following objective for the coming week: 1) identify key issues; 2) re-evaluate taskings; and 3) discuss short and long-range plans. These issues were further developed today and will be further developed on Monday, October 24, 2005.

Final test results on the Town of Appalachia connection are expected by Monday, October 24. This resource will be brought into use at such time as it is needed. In addition, testing of Appalachia back up wells is underway.

The second package plant is operational as of 8:30 AM this morning. A boil water notice remains in effect pending water sample test results that were collected October 21 and are due on Monday, October 24.

The Cracker Neck area, which is east of Big Stone Gap, will lose water if the water treatment plant goes off line. A pump is on order to deliver water into the system. However, delivery is not expected until Friday, October 28, 2005. Interim measures such as tanker delivery of water into the system are being contemplated.

The Virginia Rural Water Association circuit riders identified several leaks in the water supply system. Repairs were made to the leaks for a substantial water savings. Ongoing detection for leaks in the system will resume by Big Stone Gap officials until such time as the Association's circuit riders can return.

Potable bottled water now staged at the Big Stone Gap National Guard Armory will be relocated to a vacant building in Wise on Sunday, October 23 and Monday, October 24.

Permanent connection is complete from the Norton/ Big Stone Gap water line. The system is providing 100,000 gallon per day. Powell River Cave #1 continues pumping water during daytime hours.

Additional testing of the Clinch Haven Farms well is required. Testing will resume the week of October 24.

The Town identified a spring, Parsons Cave, near water treatment plant as a resource to serve as a back-up supply system. Water samples are to be collected October 24. The Town of Big Stone Gap plans to issue a public service announcement requesting residencies and businesses continue to conserve water.

Wise County's Sheriff department guarding blivets daily with increased patrol the weekend of 30-31 Oct. 05.

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